

# United States District Court

MIDDLE

DISTRICT OF

ALABAMA

## In the Matter of the Search of

(Name, address or brief description of person or property to be searched)

residence located at:  
 Olympiad Apartment Homes  
 155 Sylvest Dr. Apartment 501  
 Montgomery, Alabama 36117

## APPLICATION AND AFFIDAVIT FOR SEARCH WARRANT

CASE NUMBER:

2:07mj23-SRW

I, Special Agent Russell Payne

being duly sworn depose and say:

I am a(n) Special Agent, United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General and have reason to believe

Official Title

that ☐ on the person of or ☒ on the property or premises known as (name, description and/or location)

see Attachment A

in the Middle District of Alabama there  
 is now concealed a certain person or property, namely (describe the person or property to be seized)

see Attachment B

which is (state one or more bases for search and seizure set forth under Rule 41(b) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure)

property that constitutes evidence of the commission of a criminal offense

concerning a violation of Title 18 United States code, Section(s) 1708 and 1709

The facts to support a finding of Probable Cause are as follows:

See attached Affidavit.

Continued on the attached Sheet and made a part hereof.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Signature of Affiant

Sworn to before me, and subscribed in my presence

Date

2/9/07  
Susan Russ Walker,  
United States Magistrate Judge

Name and Title of Judicial Officer

at

Montgomery, Alabama

City and State

Signature of Judicial officer

## **AFFIDAVIT**

My name is Russell Payne and I am a Special Agent (SA) for the Office of Inspector General (OIG), United States Postal Service (USPS) in Birmingham, AL. I have been a Special Agent for the OIG for approximately 1 ½ years. Previous to working for the OIG, I was a Postal Inspector for the United States Postal Inspection Service for approximately 15 years in both Birmingham, AL and Mobile, AL. The OIG's area of responsible includes fraud, waste, and abuse including Postal employee misconduct. The OIG is responsible for investigations of postal employees involved in the theft of mail. My assignment includes OIG investigations in Alabama with a primary emphasis in investigations in middle and south Alabama. This affidavit is in support of an Application and Affidavit for Search Warrant for the residence of postal employee Stephanie Washington, Olympiad Apartment Homes, 155 Sylvest Dr. Apartment 501, Montgomery, AL 36117.

On October 6, 2006, the Birmingham, AL office of the USPS OIG received a mail theft complaint from Deborah Champion, Mailing Requirements Clerk, Montgomery Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC), Montgomery, AL 36619. Ms. Champion reported that Allen Griffes, Mailhandler has reported receiving numerous greeting cards in an open condition on the canceling machine at the Montgomery Post Office. According to Champion there have been two to three rifled letters received each day. Champion stated that gift cards have also been found in the canceling machine area.

On November 1, 2006 SA David Poarch and SA Raymond Hamed conducted observations at the Montgomery P&DC. The observations were made from the lookout galleries that are located in the facility. Lookout galleries are covert locations located in many USPS facilities to conduct surveillance of employees believed to be involved in criminal activities. From the lookout galleries, agents can conduct covert surveillance without the knowledge of the employees.

Agents conducted observations in the area of the loading dock, opening unit and the Advanced Facer Canceller System (AFCS). Observations were conducted between 4:30pm and 11:00pm. Stephanie Washington was identified as a possible suspect in the rifling of mail. Washington was observed behaving in a suspicious manner as she worked the AFCS machine. Agents observed Washington excessively handling greeting cards in a manner consistent with individuals trying to determine the contents of the mail. Agents observed Washington pulling selected greeting cards from the mail, removing the letters and walking to the back side of the AFCS machine. Washington could not be seen during this time or what she was doing with the mail.

On November 2, 2006 SA Poarch, SA Hamed, SA Maurice Belding, and I conducted observations at the Montgomery P&DC. Again Washington was

observed processing mail in a suspicious manner. Washington again placed selected greeting cards on a ledge next to the AFCS machine. A green colored greeting card was set aside by Washington at approximately 9:10pm and moved to several places over approximately a 1 ½ hour period. At approximately 10:30pm Washington carried the green greeting card along with other mail to the back of the AFCS. When Washington returned the greeting card appeared to be torn open.

On December 15, 2006, Kathleen Wainwright filed a Mail Loss/Rifling report with the USPS detailing the theft of a gift card she placed in the mail. Ms. Wainwright reported that on December 4, 2006 she placed in the mail an envelope containing a birthday card and a Wachovia Visa gift card #4767210008812810 valued at \$500.00. The card was addressed to Josh Griego, 1717 Missouri Ave., Omaha NE 68107 with a return address of Kathleen Wainwright, 105 Pinetree Dr., Dothan, AL 36303. The card was mailed on December 4, 2006 in a collection box located in Dothan, AL. The card was never delivered to Mr. Griego and Ms. Wainwright learned the card had been used in Montgomery, AL on December 5, 2006. The mail for the Dothan, AL post office is often processed at the P&DC in Montgomery, AL.

On January 30, 2007, I contacted the Fraud Department of Wachovia Bank and was informed card #4767210008812810 was used in Montgomery, AL at the following locations:

<b>Date of Purchase</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1. 12/05/2006	Walmart Supercenter Montgomery, AL 36617	\$ 70.86
2. 12/05/2006	The Shoe Department #0304 Montgomery, AL	\$197.91
3. 12/05/2006	Dillards # 272 Montgomery, AL	\$ 63.25
4. 12/05/2006	Foot Locker # 8468	\$166.10

Some of the items that were purchased have been identified:

The shoes purchased at The Shoe Department #0304 located in Eastdale Mall, Montgomery, AL on December 5, 2006 using the stolen Wachovia gift card have been identified as:

New Balance	Size 8 ½
Timberland Mondo – Brown	Size 10
Reebox Workout Lo White	Size 10
Reebox Classic Leather – White	Size 10

The item purchased at the Dillards #272, Eastdale Mall, Montgomery, AL on December 5, 2006 using the stolen Wachovia gift card was identified as a purchase of cologne in the cosmetics section. The item was identified as a Cool Water Woman Holiday Gift Set.

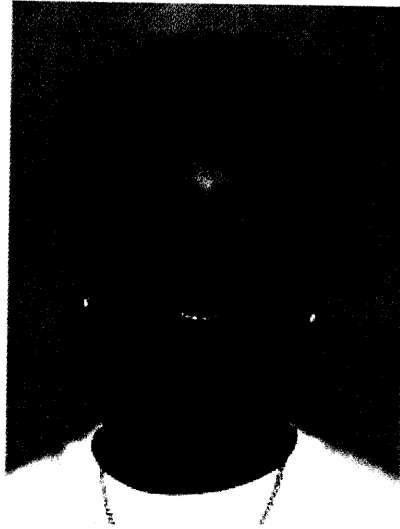
On January 3, 2007, Lisa Smith, postal customer, contacted the Postal Service detailing the theft of a gift card she placed in the mail. Ms. Smith stated she placed two gift cards into one envelope and placed them in the mail in Prattville, AL. Ms. Smith stated the envelope had a return address of Lisa Smith, 509 Mt. Airy Dr., Prattville, AL 36067 and was addressed to Barbara Smith, 67 Gramewzie Lane, Livermore Falls, ME 04254. The card was mailed on December 19, 2006 and was never delivered to the intended recipient. Ms. Smith stated both of the cards were Walmart gift cards. One was for \$100.00 and the other was for \$25.00. Mail for the Prattville, AL area is processed at the P&DC in Montgomery, AL.

Records showed the \$100.00 gift card # 6023637893588710 was used at Walmart, 6495 Atlanta Hwy, Montgomery, AL 36117 at 1:11am on morning of December 22, 2006. The \$25.00 card was never used and Ms. Smith called and canceled the card.

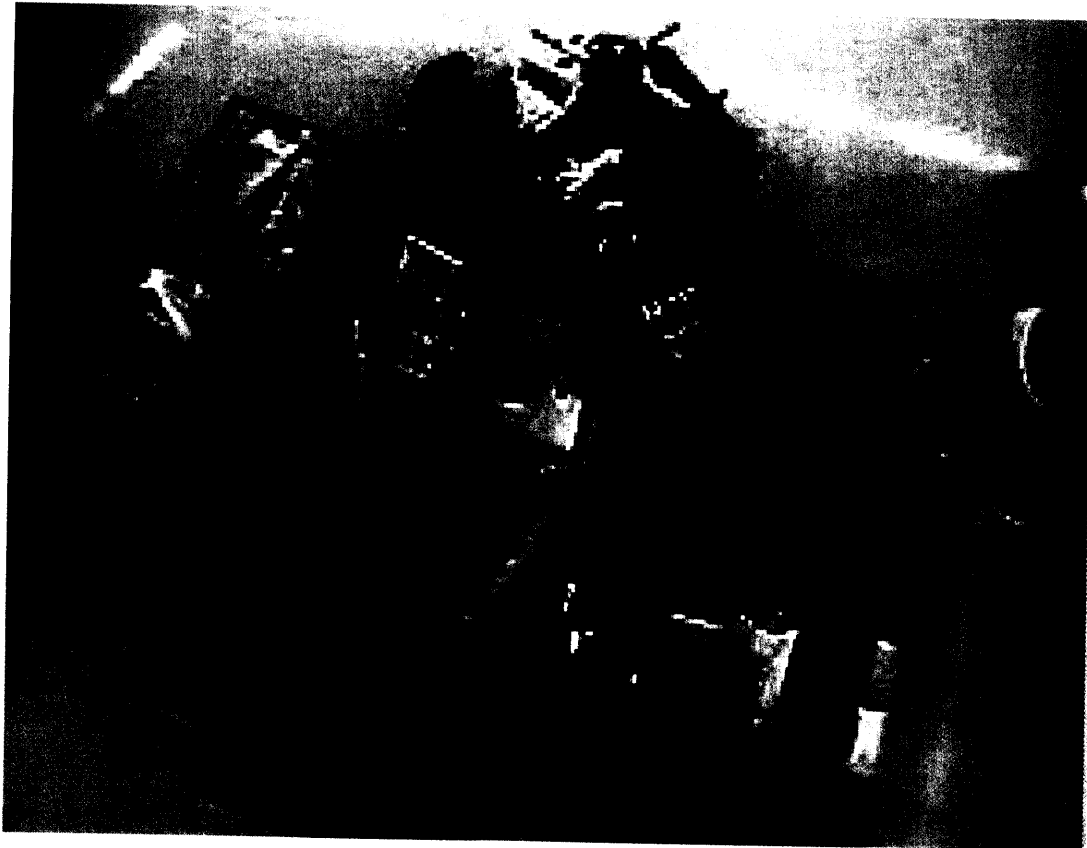
Stacy Barlow, Walmart Security, 6495 Atlanta Hwy., Montgomery, AL 36117 provided a video recording of the individual using the stolen \$100.00 gift card. The video shows a black female wearing a black or dark sweatshirt with that appears to be bear the word "Sexy" and with a word following it.

The video was shown to David Bass, Supervisor Distribution Operations, Montgomery, AL P&DC. After Mr. Bass reviewed the video he stated the person in the video was Mailhandler Stephanie Washington. Bass stated he also recognized the sweatshirt Washington was wearing and stated he has seen her wearing that sweatshirt to work. Bass could not remember what word followed "Sexy" but he remembers the shirt.

Clock ring records were reviewed for Washington on the dates when the stolen gift card was used at Walmart. The record showed Washington left work at 11:30pm on December 21, 2006. The gift card was used on the morning of December 22, 2006 at 1:11am. The Walmart is approximately a mile from the Montgomery Processing and Distribution Center.



**Driver's License Photo of Stephanie Washington**



**Individual using the stolen Walmart card**



**Individual using the stolen Walmart card**



**Individual using the stolen Walmart card**

Walmart security provided a list of the items purchased. The items included various food items, Lt. Blue 13/14 Boot Cut jeans, Green T-Shirt, and 3pc Set Tommy Girl Set – Cologne.

A database search of Stephanie Washington using Autotrack/Choicepoint listed her most recent address as 155 Sylvest Dr. Apartment 501, Montgomery, AL 36117. On February 1, 2007, I contacted the business office of Olympiad Apartments located at 155 Sylvest Dr. Montgomery, AL 36617. I was informed Stephanie Washington was the current residence of Apartment 501 located in Building 500.

Based on my training and experience I have found that agents rarely know all the items stolen by employees involved in these type violations. Based on my experience I believe, based on the type of items that were purchased, many of them will still be at the residence. Even if the items are gifts, the suspects often keep receipts and other proof of the crime. Also, other receipts of purchases normally list gift card(s) used in the purchases. Additional losses may be identified using receipts of other purchases. Also, individuals will still have in their possession at their residence distinctive clothes that were worn when the crimes were committed.

I submit, based on the above information there is probable cause to believe that in the residence located at Olympiad Apartment Homes, 155 Sylvest Dr. Apartment 501, Montgomery, AL 36117, specifically described in Attachment A, are items described in Attachment B. There is also probable cause to believe these items are evidence of violation of Title 18, United States Codes Section 1708, Possession of Stolen Mail; and Section 1709, Theft of Mail by a Postal Employee.



Russell Payne  
Special Agent  
United States Postal Service  
Office of Inspector General

Subscribed to before me this 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2007.



Susan Russ Walker  
United States Magistrate Judge



## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Premises to be searched**

155 Sylvest Dr. Apt. 501, Montgomery, Alabama 36117 is an apartment located in Olympiad Apartment Homes located at 155 Sylvest Dr. The Olympiad Apartment Homes are on Sylvest Dr. 1/10 of a mile North of Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL. The complex consists of individual buildings each containing approximately eight apartments. Each building has an individual number for the building and each apartment is numbered separately within that building. Apartment 501 is located on the bottom southwest corner of Building 500. The number "501" is on the door to the apartment. Each building in the complex is partial brick with tan siding with white trim.



**ATTACHMENT B**

Lt. Blue size 13/14 Boot Cut jeans

Green T-Shirt

Tommy Girl Cologne

New Balance	Size 8 ½
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Timberland Mondo – Brown	Size 10
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Reebox Workout Lo White	Size 10
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Reebox Classic Leather – White	Size 10
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Cool Water Woman Cologne

Dark-colored sweatshirt with a word on the front that starts with “Sexy”

Any receipts indicating purchases made with gift cards.

Any gift cards with identification numbers used for tracking.

Any greeting cards in names other than Bosch.

Various types of United States Mail matter or documents, including letters, correspondence, checks, charge cards, charge cards receipts, billing statements, and other classes of mail matter in names other than Bosch.